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ABSTRACT

Research on intergenerational learning includes a range of studies that focus on the transmission of beliefs and practices and modeling of behaviors from generation to generation. This critical review focuses on the broader issues in intergenerational learning and the multiple, though small, streams of work that examine the impact of fathers' involvement in families. The discussion focuses on four areas: (1) intergenerational and life-course issues that have emerged over the past 25 years; (2) parental influences on children, with special emphasis on parenting and grandparenting, parent-child relationships, attitudes and beliefs, divorce, and status attainment; (3) unhealthy families; and (4) racial and cultural issues. The review concludes by focusing on the limitations and inherent constraints in examining issues on fathers and by offering recommendations for research, practice, and policy analyses that might expand the discourse(s) in the field on questions about culture, the impact of divorce, and the complementary role of mothers and fathers in children's development. (Contains 212 references.) (Author)

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LR-FP-96-07
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by

Vivian L. Gadsden
University of Pennsylvania
and
Marcia Hall
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Commissioned by the

National Center on
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Abstract

Research on intergenerational learning includes a range of studies that focus on the transmission of beliefs and practices and modeling of behaviors from generation to generation. This critical review focuses on the broader issues in intergenerational learning and the multiple, though small, streams of work that examine the impact of fathers' involvement in families. The discussion focuses on four areas: (1) intergenerational and life-course issues that have emerged over the past 25 years; (2) parental influences on children with special emphasis on parenting and grandparenting, parent-child relationships, attitudes and beliefs, divorce, and status attainment; (3) unhealthy families; and (4) racial and cultural issues. The review concludes by focusing on the limitations and inherent constraints in examining issues on fathers and by offering recommendations for research, practice, and policy analyses that might expand the discourse(s) in the field on questions about culture, the impact of divorce, and the complementary role of mothers and fathers in children's development.

The National Center on Fathers and Families (NCOFF) is a policy research center that is practice-focused and practice-derived. Based at the University of Pennsylvania, NCOFF's mission is to improve the life chances of children and the efficacy of families by facilitating the effective involvement of fathers in caring for, supporting, and advocating on behalf of their children. Efforts are organized around three interdependent approaches: program development, a policy research and policymakers engagement component, and dissemination activities. NCOFF's research plan is developed around seven "Core Learnings," distilled from the experiences of programs and agencies serving fathers, mothers, and children around the country.

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Intergenerational Learning: A Review of the Literature

by Vivian L. Gadsden
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Research on intergenerational learning within families includes a range of studies that focus on the transmission of beliefs and practices and the modeling of behaviors from generation to generation. That is, it seeks to understand better the impact of families of origin on children's individual behaviors and family practices throughout the lifespan. Intergenerational learning issues cut across multiple disciplines: from psychology, to medicine, to public policy (Fitzgerald et al., 1995). As family support efforts expand and welfare reform measures are implemented, intergenerational learning is highlighted increasingly in a variety of domains: such as parenting, family development and family functioning, educational persistence, and life-course development.

Despite growing interest in intergenerational learning, research on the effects of father involvement on children's development represents but a small strand of work. The focus on fathers has a relatively recent history that began in the 1960s (Lamb, 1995; Parke, 1996) and that has grown steadily in interest and momentum over the years. Current discussions still disproportionately examine mother-child interactions. Yet, even these are based often on narrow conceptual frameworks and have a clear race and class bias, with White, middle-class families and mothers overrepresented in every area of work in the field (Barnett et al., 1991).

Although our review of the research literature for this report suggests that father involvement affects children well into their adulthood, our attempts at critical analysis of the literature have been severely constrained by the lack of work on fathers and children within the intergenerational learning knowledge base. For example, questions that focus on the quality of interaction between fathers and children persist, while assertions about what constitutes good fathering and what the differential impact of negative versus positive father involvement is are relatively unchallenged. The dearth of work, however, may present a rich opportunity to recast the issues: i.e., to pose and respond to complex questions that encourage new research about the unique features of mothers' and fathers' contributions to children's development and that interrogate the ways in which father-related issues are situated, examined, or ignored in research, practice, and policy discussions (Barnett et al., 1991; Barnett and Marshall, 1992; Furstenberg, 1993).

This review is divided into five sections summarizing the literature. We begin by providing an overview of issues that link intergenerationality and father involvement, inserting brief discussions about fathers' perceptions of their relationship with sons and daughters and gender roles. Second, we focus on intergenerational and life-course issues that have emerged over the past 25 years. Third, we review some of the research that examines parental influences on children, with special emphasis on parenting and grandparenting, intimacy, attitudes and beliefs, divorce, and status attainment.

Fourth, we describe some of the consequences of intergenerational learning within families experiencing severe problems and who are often described as "unhealthy." Fifth, we discuss a subset of studies focused on specific racial and ethnic groups. In conclusion, we comment on the limitations and inherent constraints of examining research on fathers and intergenerational learning, review critical issues from the discussion in the previous sections, and offer recommendations for research and policy analyses that might broaden discourse(s) in the field and support practice.

The studies and documents examined for this review and analysis, while being far from comprehensive, represent much of the variety in the materials on the topic. Although research on intergenerational learning is integrated across several different disciplines, most studies we reviewed were in the fields most typically associated with family development and family studies: psychology, sociology, social work, and education. Many of the empirical studies reviewed were based on research using ethnographic methods and qualitative analyses. Most data sources, however, were quantitative analyses, i.e., cross-sectional and longitudinal, that also used questionnaires and interviews. The findings in most studies demonstrated correlational rather than causal relationships, thus offering little information that can be considered definitive or evidence on any issue. There were several literature reviews, conceptual and theoretical analyses, and a few descriptive studies of successful programs that often were evaluations of clinical work rather than empirical inquiry.

We recognize the strengths and limitations within the current knowledge base and highlight throughout this review the need to improve the quality and breadth of research, particularly work that can build upon basic and applied research while contributing substantively to practice, policy research, and policy formulations. However, our goal in this review is two-fold: (1) to describe the larger context of intergenerational learning within families which also includes the important and salient discussion about mothers and their contributions to children's development and (2) to locate the issues around fathers. In the pages that follow, we provide an overview of the issues on intergenerational learning, examine how these issues have been framed and discussed to-date in relationship to fathers, and offer suggestions about the points at which expanded discourses may enter current and future discussions in the field.

INTERGENERATIONALITY AND FATHERS

In Fishel's (1991) *Family Mirrors*, the central theme of intergenerational learning is captured: what do children's lives reveal about their parents? Research in both human development and education attempt to respond to this question. In educational research, the study of intergenerational learning focuses on the ways in which parents and other family members contribute to or affect children's academic performance, school attendance, discipline, and valuing of schooling and education (see Gadsden, 1995). Developmental psychologists focus on cognitive transfer that influences children's linguistic patterns or psycho-socio-emotional well-being--from the inheritability of intelligence to parenting and environmental factors (Coles and Coles, 1988).

Parent-child relationships are among the most common social roles played over the life-course and the most enduring social ties. Research studies focus on children and parents because of the important role that parents play in children's daily lives and in their subsequent well-being as adults (Walker and Thompson, 1983). How children, boys

and girls alike, understand and develop knowledge about gender roles and expectations has received some attention over time, particularly in disciplines such as developmental psychology; but how children use this knowledge and integrate it into their lives over the life-course and within families has received considerably less attention (Coles and Coles, 1988; Parke, 1996).

The ways in which fathers and mothers convey messages about manhood, womanhood, parenting, learning, schooling, and persisting are part of a difficult communicative mechanism that may be affected by people and factors outside the family--e.g., children's peers, social experiences, and adult life circumstances. For example, in an ethnographic-focused, intergenerational study with four generations of African American families, Gadsden (forthcoming) found that adult children, both men and women, often reported difficulty enacting the messages of their parents about parent responsibility and persistence. Despite their stated acceptance of and belief in their family's values, they reported wrestling with cultural messages from peers that conflicted with parents' messages. They also reported societal messages that were in stark contrast to those of the family. Adult children reported that they were less likely to discuss these or similarly "hard" issues with their fathers as young children and some hesitancy as adults because of their sense of personal failure at persisting. In some cases, this was the result of a family history of strained relationships; in others, it was attributed to the expectation that children's problems "ought to be" the domain of mothers.

Until the 1960s, researchers assumed that boys needed a father with whom to identify or after whom to model themselves, although mothers were most often studied (Johnson, 1982). What some research suggests is that the intergenerational effects of gender role development appear stronger for mother-daughter relationships than for other possible dyadic relationships; other analyses indicate that the level of involvement of the father increases the intergenerational comfort with which boys and girls approach issues of sexuality or sexual behavior (Arditti, 1991; Barnett et al., 1991). Mothers appear to influence how both sons and daughters define and act out their gendered roles irrespective of the ages of children, from their childhood through adulthood (Aquilino, 1991).

Both research and public discussions about fathers and their children focus more often than not on the importance of fathers' relationships with sons. Studies that have included fathers typically have excluded their daughters. When research examines daughters, it is centered on issues of gender identification (Kristal, 1979) or mending fractured and painful father-daughter relationships (MacNabb, 1993). However, during the 1960s and early 1970s, a large body of research emerged to suggest that fathers were more involved than mothers in reinforcing femininity in girls and masculinity in boys (Johnson, 1963; Lozoff, 1974; Biller and Weiss, 1970). Fathers stated explicitly that they felt more responsibility toward a male child than a female child (Gilbert et al., 1982).

In a more recent study, Nydegger and Mitteness (1991) found that "fathers not only socialize sons into their male world but also share it with them" (p. 255). Focused on how parent-adult child relations are affected by the gender of the child, the data suggest that fathers considered their primary responsibility to be socializing their sons into the male world and protecting their daughters. Fathers in the sample, upper-middle-class men, reported that they found it easier to understand sons.

Although these findings appear to contrast with earlier work in which fathers

named daughters more often as the child to which they feel closest (e.g., Lowenthal et al., 1975), they in fact may be consistent in many ways, particularly when the range of fathers' responses is examined. For example, Nydegger and Mitteness report that fathers named sons and daughters equally often when asked to identify the child they considered closest to them; in another instance, they note that throughout their interviews they were struck by fathers' stated affection for their daughters, attributable possibly to the more relaxed relationships fathers reported having with their daughters. Nydegger and Mitteness conclude that adult relationships are shaped by gender differences; fathers share a common male world with their sons, from which daughters are excluded; and fathers perceive their duties to their children differently based on the child's gender.

Rather than suggesting that there is a particularized relationship between fathers and sons, these studies point perhaps to the complexities that some men face in reconciling their role as "the modeler" of manhood (within traditional social norms) with their role as father, parent, and contributor to the whole of family life. In addition, fathers who see their role as only or primarily the provider or head of the family may assign more importance to these role features for their sons' future role as fathers, consider them as outside the immediate concern of girls, or see them as distinctive from any need for fathers to transmit their personal experiences, expectations, and hopes to their daughters. In other instances, fathers simply may feel unprepared to enter such conversations with daughters.

Perhaps the area that has received the least attention in discussions about the role of men in modeling male behaviors is the effects of fathers' sexual orientation on their children's sexual orientation. The work of Bailey et al. (1995) on the effect of gay fathers on the sexual orientation of their sons suggests little intergenerational connection of actual behaviors, although attitudes and openness to nontraditional lifestyles may be affected. For sons, interpretations of father behaviors also may be linked to issues around the interpretations and nature of masculinity within different societies and the ways in which fathers transfer their beliefs about masculinity. Collins' (1994) *Fatherson* examines this within the context of archetypal masculinity, while Pittman (1993) attaches men's need to assert themselves as fathers and sons to part of the search for masculinity.

Parent-child relationships often are affected by a variety of factors and changes over the life-course. Work on father-son relationships which is comparatively overrepresented in nonacademic, popular books, focuses on several of these complex issues, including the evolution of father-son relationships to the transmission of the provider role ethic. Still, even these texts discuss little about the messages conveyed from fathers to sons about nurturing and fathers' caring (see Canfield, 1996; Wideman, 1994). On the other hand, Snarey's (1993) four-generational research study on men and generativity offers a compelling analysis that both bridges and parses some of the issues that concern men's understanding of traditional gender roles and contemporary notions of caring, nurturing fathers.

In a work based largely on clinical experience, Bassoff (1994) focuses on how mothers contribute to sons' developing into loving men and on the important role of gender: how boys struggle in separating from their mothers and how mothers can help in this struggle. Bassoff notes that in general boys need more fathering and less mothering. However, although boys appear to fare better when their fathers are involved Bassoff suggests that sons of single mothers can also grow up to be happy and healthy, and single

mothers make better parents than unhappily married mothers.

The issues discussed in the field are developed out of a variety of conceptualizations and definitions of intergenerationality, many of which have been examined only marginally. These conceptual frameworks provide a context for and inform the subsequent discussion in this review.

FRAMEWORKS FOR UNDERSTANDING INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING

Definitions and Meanings

Researchers use the term *intergenerational learning* as an all-encompassing concept for several kinds of human relationships across different generations. Although there is some agreement about the general uses of the concept, intergenerational learning researchers often have divergent opinions about the definitions of *generation* itself.

In most studies, the term *generation* has been used to refer to a person's position in family lineage (Hagestad, 1981). Methodological discussions of family relations may separate generation and lineage as two measuring constructs central to the study of families. At the generational level, the unit of analysis is the individual who occupies a specific position within the intergenerational family structure; at the lineage level, several individual family members are observed and are linked into a single analytical unit (Acock, 1984; Hagestad, 1981). In this review, we refer to generation as a subset of lineage.

Acock (1984) provides a useful framework and informative analysis that we use liberally in this review to present the commonly cited perspectives on generations: rank descent, cohort, developmental age, discrete time span, and zeitgeist. *Rank descent* is not a function of age; rather, an individual is placed in a generation based on his or her position in the family's hierarchy (Acock and Bengtson, 1975, 1978; Acock et al., 1982; Bengtson, 1975; Hill et al., 1970; Troll, 1970). A self-sufficient, independent, adolescent parent is assigned the same status as a 60 year-old independent parent because of the ordering of their positions as parents in their respective families. While rank descent makes it possible to study multiple generations, the age disparity does not address temporal or historical issues that affect family development or family members' perceptions.

Cohorts as a generational indicator is based on age-homogeneous groupings. Children who are of the same age are assumed to have experienced certain social events in similar ways. These social events are thought to contribute to the life-views of individuals as family members, suggesting consistency within age cohorts. Two primary limitations of cohorts, as Acock (1984) suggests, are, first, that the differential ways that families mediate social events and circumstances are not acknowledged, and, second, that behaviors are attributed to generations as a function of social change when in fact more immediate and personal reasons unique to a family may be better explanations. Acock (1984) also suggests that the cohort concept is relied upon often, when "more proximate causes of generational cleavage" should be considered (Acock, 1984), such as when parent and child share an important or difficult series of life events.

The other three perspectives--*developmental age*, *discrete time span*, and *zeitgeist*--have received relatively less attention. Developmental age combines rank-descent and cohort perspectives and defines generation in relationship to task similarity among individuals, e.g., people who were housewives around the same time (Bengtson and Kuypers, 1971). Discrete time span

focuses on the time it takes a new cohort to grow and to assume control, a time period of about 30 years. Zeitgeist is used to denote a generation when all in that group share a "content of style, politics, values, [and] art" that is historically distinct (Acock, 1984, p. 2). The zeitgeist perspective would label "hippies" as a distinct generation without concern for date of birth, rank in family lineage, or developmental stage.

It is important to note here that intergenerational learning may include more than the family, although families create an obvious intergenerational connection. Intergenerational learning may be conceptualized more broadly as a wide array of participants learning and teaching each other--parents, grandparents, teachers, and children. Several intergenerational programs have been created, for example, that connect older individuals with children who are not biologically related but who need support and nurturance (Freedman, 1989; Weinstein-Shr and Henkin, 1991).

Research and practice on intergenerational learning within and outside of biologically connected families assume that in settings where children and adults have opportunities to interact over periods of time, adults transmit knowledge, beliefs, and practices to children either through direct teaching or informal activities. Such transmission and learning may take place in formal settings such as schools where adult teachers share with children the strategies for reading and writing and facilitate the development of these abilities using a set of accepted approaches. It may take place within homes--between parent and child, grandparent and grandchild, and other adult-child configurations--and include an adult relative modeling a variety of behaviors, talking, or demonstrating the value and importance of beliefs, attitudes, and practices (Gadsden, in press). Intergenerational learning may be a part of relationships established in community settings such as churches in which an adult helps a child understand the written ritual of the church or participate in church or community activities.

Up to this point, we have focused primarily on unidirectional, intergenerational learning--from parent to child. Within this traditional perspective, parents are considered the principal agents of socialization in childhood (Freud, 1933, Erickson, 1950; Heilbrun et al., 1965). The family is seen as the provider of stability and continuity to individual members and of the systematic socialization through which children come to understand the norms of the social order. Intergenerational similarity in attitudes is attributed to the socialization function and activities of the family (Glass et al., 1986). Children learn their parents' beliefs, values, and attitudes through both direct teaching and indirect observation; they actively seek out this information or passively accept it as a function of social conditioning. Implicit in traditional explanations is the assumption that childhood socialization is so powerful as to continue throughout adulthood (Chodorow, 1978; Campbell, 1969).

Some of the most compelling research from the 1980s to the present challenges the traditional approach along two lines. The first examines issues of race, class, religious affiliation, and what Glass et al. (1986) describe as other *social statuses* that affect an individual's life experiences. Acock (1984) refers to these social statuses when he suggests that parents and children share a common location in the social structure. The similarity between children and parents is seen as a result of these social and cultural statuses as much as parents' socialization of children. Social statuses provide a comfortable context for beliefs to persist unchallenged because they cohere with or explain the life circumstances of individuals. Thus, an upper-middle-class, 30-year-old, White, Protestant male well might express

basic beliefs that appear remarkably similar to those of his parents. These similarities would be seen as the result of the social statuses of privilege, maleness, race, and religion that allow for the perpetuation of certain behaviors and practices from one generation to another.

The second line concerns the reverse direction or bidirectionality of intergenerational influence. Here, researchers examine children's influence on their parents and assume that there is reciprocal or bidirectional learning from parent to child and from child to parent (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). Examples of this may be found in programs such as Head Start which is designed for young children but result in significant changes in parents' behaviors and choices as well (Slaughter et al., 1987). Proponents of this interactionist perspective argue that children increasingly influence their parents as both children and parents age and that the unidirectional flow from parent to child ignores the power of reciprocal relationships between children and parents (Bengtson and Troll, 1978; Glass et al., 1986; Featherman and Lerner, 1985; Hagestad, 1981, 1984; Lerner and Spanier, 1978).

An example of children's influence on their parents is derived from interviews with mothers, particularly work in the 1960s and 1970s. Hagestad in 1977 reported that three-fourths of the mothers in a sample indicated that their children's attempts to influence them were successful. Parents of youthful radicals changed their views after confrontations with children (Keniston, 1967), as did parents whose children cohabited as radical college students (Angres, 1975). Parents have differential responses to each of their children, and children shape the behavior of their parents (Moss and Abramowitz, 1982). While the assumption that influence flows only from parent to child represents a limited view of socialization, the issue of directionality may be a complex of historical and social forces operating within both of the generations, making identification of appropriate models or patterns difficult.

Family Life-Course

Research analyses on families use life-course frameworks to connote the constantly changing role of family members and the family structures to which they belong (Germain, 1994; Kreppner and Lerner, 1989). Life-span and life-course, while similar in many ways, differ in their emphases. Whereas the work on life cycle describes human development as occurring in isolated, separable, fixed stages, life-course perspectives offer a wider array of situations and conditions; they consider life transitions, life events, and other life issues as ongoing processes that are constantly changing. Life-span approaches trace central phenomena such as sense of self or problem-solving abilities from infancy through old age to determine how they are transformed as a result of both psychological and social change (Baltes and Brim, 1979; Baltes and Warner-Schie, 1973; Baltes et al., 1988; Neugarten, 1969).

Life-course approaches examine the relationship between individual change and the timing of major life events, e.g., the onset of schooling, the time at which someone leaves home, the beginning of childbearing, and retirement from the labor force (Elder, 1973). Family life-course frameworks emphasize the continuity and reciprocity of life experiences and the ways in which new life experiences draw upon and are recycled over time--fluid rather than laconic role transitions (Germain, 1994). What this work also suggests is that families are units of individuals and that the events, episodes, and activities that affect individual family members also influence the unit and the course of family life. Each family member in

each generation has a space that he or she shapes, and that shaping therefore becomes a part of the way families construct themselves and adapt to change. Germain (1994) notes that these transitions and events are both predictable and unpredictable and may be experienced as stressors or challenges, depending upon the relationships among personal, cultural, and environmental factors. Some transitions and events are experienced by all families, and others differentiate families. Any one transition for an individual or within the family can precipitate a change or transformation for the entire family unit (Germain, 1983).

These and other human development issues are examined in a variety of disciplines that contribute to our understanding of human behavior--e.g., history (Hareven, 1977, 1982), sociology (Elder et al., 1984), and gerontology (Riley, 1985). In this interdisciplinary work, life changes and life events are seen as time-specific rather than fixed. That is, the onset of these changes and events may occur within a specific period or may continue over time, is not always predictable, and may be affected by multiple factors. Time may refer to historical and social changes that affect people born during a time period, e.g., gender role changes resulting from the women's movement; to individual time, reflecting how individuals shape and experience their lives; to social time, integrating individual human processes into collective activities within the family (Germain, 1990, 1994). However, life events and changes are experienced differently within different societies and are subject to enormous cultural variability in socially accepted stages of adult development (Atchley, 1975; Fry, 1988).

There is little doubt that whole generations and subsequent ones may be affected by different and difficult life circumstances. The intergenerational impact of these life circumstances is examined in detail in the work of Elder (1974; Elder et al., 1984). His longitudinal study on the impact of the Great Depression in the 1930s and the Second World War (1974) showed that the Depression and the war affected people differently. These differences depended, in large part, on individuals' age at the onset of the event, economic status at the start of the Depression, and the severity of the Depression's impact on family income. For example, Elder reports that people who became teenagers at the time of the Depression experienced the fewest difficulties. They often needed to help their families by finding odd jobs and doing housework that prior to the Depression they would not have been required to do. Rather than adding to their stress, these new responsibilities seemingly gave the teenagers a sense of usefulness and of value and accomplishment.

In contrast, young children experienced greater difficulty during the Depression. Many experienced family disruption during the entire course of their childhoods as their fathers became unemployed, often causing their families to lose homes and to accept difficult living conditions. Then, their fathers went off to war, and their mothers went off to work. Elder found that the effects of these early experiences and abrupt transitions often lingered and that their manifestations in older life, as might be expected, reflected the quality of the experience and choices of the mothers. For example, women from middle-class households--who had experienced only mild economic difficulties, who learned to cope, and who bore children in spite of the hardship--appeared to find the transition to retired and reduced income less difficult than women who had not.

Difficult life circumstances result in families sometimes changing their perspectives and self-perceptions, that is, in their constructing a collection of behaviors and practices that are associated internally and

externally with the family or with hardships in the family. Several frameworks are used to represent these changes. Reiss' (1981) *family paradigms*, for example, are defined by family members and include the shared, implicit beliefs that families have about themselves, their social worlds, and their relationship to social structures. He writes that "the family, through the course of its own development, fashions fundamental and enduring assumptions about the world in which it lives. The assumptions are shared by all family members, despite the disagreements, conflicts, and differences that exist within the family" (p. 1). These assumptions, Reiss suggests, are rarely conscious. Rather, paradigms are influenced by family history, culture, and the values and meanings assigned to experiences and perceptions. They are affected by the life views of family members — that is, views of the world as ordered or disorganized, predictable or unpredictable, and fair or inequitable. Family rituals and spatial and temporal conditions arise from and maintain family paradigms (Kantor and Lehr, 1975; Hartman and Laird, 1983). When families face stresses, they may move from implicit assumptions to stated alternatives to individual and family survival (Germain, 1994).

Stack and Burton (1993) expand on their multigenerational research to focus on *kinscripts*. Kinscripts are developed upon the premise that families have their own agenda, their own interpretation of cultural norms, and their own histories. Stack and Burton's model focuses on the temporal nature of the life-course (e.g., lifetime, social time, family time, and historical time) and life-course independence (e.g., the ways that individual transitions and trajectories are affected by or contingent upon the life stages of others). The framework is developed around three critical issues: (1) temporal and interdependent factors in family role transitions, (2) creation and intergenerational transmission of family norms, and (3) negotiation, exchange, and conflict within families over the life-course.

Gadsden's (1993) work with multiple generations of African American and Puerto Rican families highlights the concept of *family cultures*, cumulative life texts and artifacts of individual family members that contribute to life-course perspectives, decisions, and behaviors. Intergenerational practices and learning within families are formed around an interplay of accepted ethnic traditions, cultural rituals, sociopolitical histories, religious practices and beliefs, and negotiated roles within families over time. Issues of race and culture are deeply embedded in family cultures which are manipulated by societal events and affected by shifts in family mobility. They seem to revolve around a family-defined premise that family members hold as central to their purpose and to the life-trajectory of children. Families vary in their level of desire to adapt these cultures which may be fluid or static, depending on the degree to which family members adapt or accommodate change. In family cultures, family members construct traditions, practices, beliefs, and behaviors that they believe are critical to survival and achievement, and that are embedded in their own family, ethnic, and racial histories.

Antonucci and Akiyama's (1991) concept, *convoys of social support*, builds on Hagestad's (1981) work which argued that researchers need to keep in mind that historical changes affect individual development in and out of relationships across the life-course. The construction, negotiation, and destruction of family norms, values, beliefs, and bonds cannot be assessed through analysis of aggregate data, nor strictly through quantitative research. Antonocci and Akiyama's convoy is "the group with whom one moves through life" (p. 106) and incorporates both the concepts

of cohorts and generations. It was used in the authors' empirical study of social support among adults over 50. Subjects in this study identified people in their social networks by level of closeness and by type of functions provided. The authors found more similarities between the structure and support functions in parents' and adult children's networks and fewer for grandparents and grandchildren. Although Antonucci and Akiyama suggest that their study provided some empirical support for the positive attributes of the convoy model, they acknowledge that convoys could have a negative impact.

Issues in Family Solidarity

When individuals in a family become parents, the impending birth and actual arrival of a child often transform the family: a new generation is added. When young adults become parents, not only do the roles of those in the immediate household change but also those of nonhousehold kin (Fischer, 1988). How families respond to these changes may be attributed in part to the family's solidarity. The changes in these kin ties may be ignored but are fundamental to solidarity (Roberts et al., 1991). Research on family solidarity aims to understand what it is that keeps a group of people such as a family together or that enables a family to cohere around important issues in times of both crisis and calm.

Associational solidarity is the amount of time a family spends together, either through face-to-face or distant interactions (e.g., letter writing and telephone conversations). It is related to parents' self-esteem (Small et al., 1988). Associational solidarity is predicated on the assumption that family members' participation in regularly shared activities results in the transmission of more elements of these family's cultural heritage than those of other families. That is, families that demonstrate solidarity through regular visits and apparent close bonds share a common view of the world (Aldous and Hill, 1965). However, many families spend a great deal of time together without ever engaging in discussions about critical issues and are less likely to discuss openly an issue that can be viewed as a possible point of generational cleavage (Jessop, 1981).

Affective solidarity is based on theories such as symbolic interaction in which affect and support lead to concordance. Symbolic interaction relies on significant others as a source of the generalized other. In affective solidarity, the stronger the bonds between parents and children, the more likely the parents will be seen as significant others. However, empirical evidence on affective solidarity suggests that the degree of affection between parent and child is not necessarily the result of the amount of influence that parents have (Hoge et al., 1982), and parental affect changes over the life-span (Offer et al., 1981). The most beneficial aspects of intergenerational solidarity pertain to the cultivation of high self-esteem among children and adolescents and act as a force mobilizing family members to provide emotional and material support for one another over the adult life-course (Roberts et al., 1991).

Summary

Intergenerational learning issues may be described in terms of time, location, or social events. What is transmitted intergenerationally is as much a function of demographic features within a family line as direct socialization. Intergenerational groupings may be described as rank descent, cohorts, development age, discrete time, or zeitgeist. Generation refers to one's position in the family's lineage. A family's lineage represents the life-course development of individual family members and of the family

unit itself. Frameworks for life-course family development include paradigms, kinscripts, and cultures that families construct; as family members mature, they may be associated with convoys of support, age-cohort members who provide closeness and care. Issues such as family solidarity and cohesiveness, while part of family development discussions, need to be examined more intensively. However, current analyses suggest that family solidarity consists of more than shared activities by family members. Continued work should focus on how relationships develop and change over the life-course of parents and children and how cohesiveness is experienced both positively and negatively in families.

PARENT-CHILD AND FAMILY RELATIONSHIPS

The impact of parents and families on intergenerational learning focuses broadly on five general areas: (1) parenting and grandparenting, (2) relationships and intimacy, (3) educational, religious, and social behaviors and values, (4) family instability and divorce, and (5) status attainment.

Parenting and Grandparenting

Children are likely to emulate the parenting behaviors to which they are exposed during childhood. Generally, these are the behaviors of parents, but often they include grandparents (Burton and Dilworth-Anderson, 1991; Pearson et al., 1990; Tinsley and Parke, 1987). The probability of an intergenerational linkage is increased when parents and children are similar in education, social status, employment, and other social factors that affect continuity within a family and the ability of an adult parent to contribute to the social welfare of the family (Chase-Lansdale et al., 1994). This transfer seems apparent whether in multigenerational families, i.e., in families in which women have been heads of households over time, or in intergenerationally intact families.

Many intergenerational studies reflect findings similar to those of Cox et al. (1985) which suggest that children who experience positive home environments tend to create similar environments for their children. The authors focused on 38 White, middle-class couples and found that young adults who, prior to the birth of their first-born, reported high quality parenting by their parents adapted better to early parenthood and became better parents themselves than young adults who reported low-quality parenting. Fu et al. (1986), in a path analytic model using data from 150 grandmother-mother-child family units, found that childrearing attitudes of parents were the principal means of transmitting behavioral patterns to successive generations. Grandmother's dependence had a direct effect on mother's dependence and an indirect effect on mother's family interdependence and parenting attitudes.

Although some argue that there is little difference in children's perceptions of father and mother parenting (Shepard, 1980), sons and daughters appear to interpret parents' messages in different ways. Simons et al. (1992) found that girls are more attuned to their parents' beliefs about the consequences of supportive involvement for children's development, while boys are more attuned to their parents' beliefs about discipline. Adolescents were equally likely to pick up these messages from both parents.

One synthesizing note to discussions about parenting influences is Ijzendoorn's (1992) examination of psychological studies on nonclinical populations of children ranging from infants to college students. Ijzendoorn suggests that little is known about the mechanism of intergenerational

transmission of parenting and that it is difficult to ascertain how people specifically learn to parent. Learning to be a parent and to acquire a certain parenting style may be as much an outcome of modeling and coaching as other cognitive processes. Most studies are restricted only to showing that a relationship between infant and adult characteristics exists but fail to give insight into the causal mechanism.

Discussions about parenting treat harsh parenting styles as a small subset. Children who were exposed to corporal punishment appear to adopt less harsh parenting styles than their parents and are less harsh when, as adults, they do not co-reside with their parents. The grandparent generation in a Simons et al. (1991) study was more aggressive in parenting than the generation of parents actively engaged in childrearing. One-third of the fathers and one-fourth of the mothers participating in the study were spanked or slapped regularly as adolescents, with men being hit more often by their fathers and women being disciplined severely by both parents. Harsh parenting in the study is negatively associated with income, i.e., grandparents who were harshest in parenting were typically those experiencing hardship.

Chase-Lansdale et al. (1994), in a study of multigenerational families, found a relationship between mothers and grandmothers harsh parenting styles; in particular, the parenting styles of co-resident mothers and grandmothers were harsher than those of mothers and grandmothers who lived apart. The mothers and grandmothers studied were from low-income homes and similar in educational attainment, marital status, intellectual ability, income, and opportunities for the future. The potential for a better life may have appeared limited for mothers and grandmothers and each succeeding generation in the family, perceived as perpetuating the existing condition of the family.

Despite differences in parenting practices across cultural and ethnic groups (Fry, 1993), over 90 percent of American families condone and use physical punishment in the rearing of their children, according to the National Family Violence Survey (see Straus, 1991). Fry (1993) suggests that adults favor conflict resolution patterns they experienced as children within their family and that these ways of resolving conflict become a part of community practices of violence. Straus (1991) argues that physical punishment even in parenting should be considered a form of violence. While it may curtail immediate misbehavior, asserts Straus, it may in fact promote juvenile delinquency and adult criminal behavior. However, the causal direction of the association between physical punishment and subsequent misconduct has not been established convincingly.

The importance of relationships between grandparents and grandchildren is noted in several studies (e.g., Franks et al., 1993; Pearson et al., 1990; Tinsley and Parke, 1987). Since the 1960s, studies have identified styles of grandparental interaction: formal, funseeker, surrogate parent, reservoir of family wisdom, and distant figure (Neugarten and Weinstein, 1964); remote, companionate, and involved (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1986); centrality, valued elder, immortality through clan, reinvolvement with personal past, and indulgence (Kivnik, 1985); surrogate parent, buddy, storyteller, and confidant (Franks et al., 1993); family historian, mender, support, and motivator (Gadsden, forthcoming). In these multiple roles, grandparents fill in for parents, engage children in activities, or serve as a source of invaluable support and guidance.

Children are likely to have grandparents accessible and available to them throughout adolescence (Hagestad, 1981; Matthews and Sprey, 1982). Grandparents have direct influence on older grandchildren, many of whom as they become more independent

simply bypass their parents (Kearl and Hermes, 1984; Walker and Thompson, 1983). They typically do not exact the discipline on their grandchildren that they did on their own children. In most families, grandparents contribute in meaningful, substantive, and treasured ways to their grandchildren's views, practices, and beliefs (Gadsden, 1995). For increasing numbers of children, particularly those in low-income communities, grandparents are the primary caregivers but are neither acknowledged nor supported by family policies.

Intimacy

Children's experiences with their parents influence their perceptions about and the quality of their intimate relationships and mate choices (Benson et al., 1992, 1993). Fathers affect daughters' mate choice more than sons' choices (Jedlicka, 1984). According to Jedlicka, whose work focused on Asian, Hawaiian, and U. S. mainland residents living in Hawaii, men marry women who resemble their mothers and women marry men who resemble their fathers, consistent with psychoanalytic theory.

However, the connection is more complex as it relates to the way in which individuals communicate to intimate others in adult life. Benson et al. (1993) found some support for intergenerational transmission of patterns of intimacy, confirming the hypothesis that anxiety resulting from controlling families influences subsequent communication among adolescents. This, the authors suggest, is particularly true in romantic relationships in which self-doubts and worries of anxious individuals result in aversive communication.

Intimacy is linked to individuation. Mothers' level of individuation (one's ability to have a close relationship with family members and maintain boundaries of self) is predictive of the offspring's level of individuation (Harvey et al., 1991). For fathers and children, the father's level of psychological distress is the most important predictor of the level of intimacy and individuation perceived by children in relationships.

Sons and daughters of involved fathers report greater comfort in discussing sexual matters than do children of uninvolved fathers (Bennett, 1984). Fathers appear to play a key role in sex-role development for daughters and in the postures they assume in intimate relationships. Daughters of highly involved fathers exhibit more cautious behaviors, such as being careful not to get pregnant. Girls in homes where fathers are involved tend to delay sexual encounters and pregnancy (Harris and Morgan, 1991).

Educational, Religious, and Social Attitudes and Beliefs

Parents influence children's attitudes and beliefs at different levels throughout the life-course, and the impact of these influences changes as children mature (Barnett et al., 1991). The intergenerational transmission of attitudes differs based on the subject area being considered. Some subject areas are more important than others to the family and are supported by family interaction and the family's social network (Acock, 1984). Parents' actual attitudes often differ from the attitudes that children perceive them as having (Acock and Bengtson, 1980). These perceived attitudes and encouragement for certain kinds of behaviors may exceed the effect of modeling. Children agree with their parents most often on religion, politics, and education. Fathers and sons report the least agreement on sex roles and sexual behavior in some studies (e.g., Bengtson and Troll, 1978) and similar sex-role beliefs in others (Emihovich et al., 1984).

Whether parents' beliefs and attitudes toward education affect children's academic achievement consumes a great deal of the educational and social science literature (e.g., Marsh, 1990; McLanahan and Sandefur, 1994; Paulson, 1994; Williams, 1994). However, considerably less work focuses on how parents' educational values and beliefs are translated by children as adult choices and behaviors. Cohen (1987) found that parents' encouragement of children had a greater effect on children's academic definitions and choices than their actual educational level. Daughters modeled their parents more than sons whereas sons were more influenced by their parents' definitions of educational aspirations and attainments. Children of white-collar families tended to be influenced more in terms of modeling than others. Mothers and fathers did not differ in their influence on children.

Recent research on racial socialization suggests that parents' views about ethnic groups other than their own influence children's beliefs and attitudes about those groups, particularly African Americans and other people of color (Jeter, 1995). Jeter (1995) in a study on African American college students found that their views mirrored those of their parents in most cases, particularly when parents' images were reinforced by the actual experiences of the students. Carlson and Iovini (1985) found that for 100 Black and White father-son pairs perceived attitudes were more important than actual attitudes for the socialization of White adolescents; no correspondence in father-son racial attitudes and no sharp distinction between fathers' actual attitudes and perceived attitudes were found.

Intergenerational attitudes toward gender roles often are apparent in the types of activities in which a child chooses to participate or his or her beliefs about appropriate behaviors for girls versus boys. While findings of studies on intergenerational learning reveal no clear differences in gender role attitudes, there appears to be some overlap with political consciousness. Mothers of activists appear more liberal than mothers of nonactivists (Troll and Bengtson, 1979), and parents' educational backgrounds appear to account for differences in political orientation (Glass et al., 1986). Research in the 1970s and 1980s identified adolescent-parent agreement on politics as second to religion (Bengtson and Troll, 1978); concordance was greatest on issues that are highly visible such as party affiliation (Niemi, 1974; Hoge et al., 1982). Much of the work on the transmission of political activism suggests that activists show generational continuity and are more liberal than their peers as they grow older, even though activists become more moderate over time. Activists tend to have greater disagreement with their parents on political attitudes and orientations than do nonactivists, except in the case of mothers and daughters. However, these differences are associated with young adulthood and do not appear to reduce the quality of family relationships (Glass et al., 1986; Miller, 1987; Dunham and Bengtson, 1992).

Parents appear to exert enormous control over children in religious activities by either communicating religious values or requiring their children to attend religious activities. Mothers' influence on their children's religious socialization appears to be weaker than that of fathers (Clark et al., 1988; Clark et al., 1987). In addition, daughters and sons react differently to parents' attempts to influence their behaviors (Hoge et al., 1982). In a study with 60 White, middle-class mother-father-son triads from Protestant congregations in Richmond, Virginia and El Paso, Texas, Clark et al. (1988) found that fathers' beliefs and commitment to those beliefs were related to some aspects of sons' religious beliefs but that mothers' influence was minimal.

Agreement between adolescents and their parents was greatest for religion (Bengtson and Troll, 1978). Several religious variables appear to affect transmission of religious beliefs and practices to adolescents: content of theological beliefs, consistency of parental religious beliefs, church attendance, and frequency of discussions of religion within the family (Hoge and DeZulueta, 1985). Intergenerational transmission is greater for religious denomination than religious attitudes (Acock and Bengtson, 1975; Clark et al., 1988; Jennings and Niemi, 1968; Hill et al., 1970).

An expected effect of parents' socialization of children is similarity in parent-child values. In some cases, youth-parent agreement on selected issues is only partially accounted for by family attributes (McBroom et al., 1985). Children attribute their own values to their parents, and the accuracy of children's perceptions of parents' socialization values enhances their own value of socialization. Structural features within families (e.g., the decisionmaking mode, such as whether it is democratic) were found to be more important than affective factors such as one's relationships with parents (McBroom et al., 1985). Other data (e.g., Whitbeck and Gecas, 1988) suggest that parents' perceptions of children's personal values are strongly related to parents' personal values. In addition, parents are more likely to see their values as more consistent with those of their daughters than with those of their sons.

On the flip side, parents' attitudes also affect children's union formation behaviors. Axinn and Thornton (1993) examined the degree to which children's experiences with cohabiting and marital unions influence their attitudes as well as their mothers' attitudes toward cohabitation. Data came from a 23-year, seven-wave panel study of mothers and children in Detroit. Mothers were interviewed seven times between 1962 and 1985. The results suggest that mothers' attitudes have more influence on their daughters than sons, and daughter cohabitation experiences have more influence on mothers' attitudes than do the cohabitation experiences of sons.

Divorce and Marital Instability

The intergenerational effect of divorce on children is a complex issue that should be examined within a broader view of the process and impact of divorce. Children of divorce may consider it an option for themselves and others experiencing marital difficulties (Amato and Booth, 1991). A central differentiator between divorced families and intact families is the level of income available to the family and the impact of poverty. Divorce is a stressful experience for most children, accompanied by a decline generally in the standard of living for mother-headed households (Emery, 1988; Duncan and Hoffman, 1985) and less frequent contact with the father (Furstenberg and Nord, 1985; Furstenberg et al., 1983). While some children may choose to divorce in the face of disharmony, others seemingly persist, even when there are potential deleterious effects on themselves and their children. The unpleasant consequence of divorce, particularly decreased family income, results in some children viewing marital dissolution unfavorably and in their entering into adulthood with a strong belief that marriage should be a lifelong commitment. In short, it is difficult to isolate divorce alone as the salient variable in adult children's choices to divorce.

Studies through the 1960s and early 1970s found either no effect or little effect of living with a single parent (see Duncan and Duncan, 1969; Bumpass and Sweet, 1972). Since the 1980s, there has been an upsurge in studies that suggest that marital disruption has deleterious consequences for children

(Hogan et al., 1990). McLanahan and Bumpass (1988) describe three explanations for intergenerational instability. The first attributes intergenerational effects of divorce to the decline of the family's standard of living (Becker, 1981; Krein and Beller, 1986, 1988). The second focuses on childhood and adolescent socialization and the implications of father absence on children's personality development and sexual orientation for sons (Emihovich et al., 1984) and on daughters' interest in and dependency on men (Hetherington, 1972).

The third is developed around stress theory which examines family events and their consequences for family organization and equilibrium (Hill, 1949; Elder, 1974). Marital disruption may produce disequilibrium within the family system, encouraging children to assume adult roles (Booth, Brinkerhoff, and White, 1984). McLanahan proposes a fourth explanation. She suggests that differences in one- and two-parent families may be due to selectivity and pre-existing differences between families (e.g., children who experience problems subsequent to divorce well might have experienced those problems had their families been intact).

Despite inconsistency across studies, there is some agreement that parental divorce is associated with liberal attitudes toward divorce in adulthood; few studies, states Amato and Booth (1991), have found the opposite pattern. Studies with college students suggest that people from disrupted families expressed more favorable attitudes toward divorce than those who grew up in intact families (Coleman and Ganong, 1984; Greenberg and Nay, 1982; Rozendal and Well, 1983). Amato and Booth (1991) in a study of college women found that children whose parents divorce tend to be more accepting of and hold more positive attitudes toward divorce than individuals from happy, intact families. However, individuals from continuously intact families experiencing high levels of parental conflict also hold favorable views toward divorce. Children whose parents divorced are more likely to see their own marriages end in divorce. Experiencing divorce within one's own marriage also results in more liberal attitudes toward divorce. Parental divorce or conflict does not appear to have an effect on egalitarian views toward gender roles.

Amato (1988) found that adult children of divorce were more likely than individuals from intact family backgrounds to disagree with the statement, "You need two parents to bring up a child" (see Amato and Booth, 1991). Kulka and Weingarten (1979) suggest that men from divorced families of origin were more likely than other men to agree that divorce is often the best solution to marital problems; no corresponding effect was observed for women. Brennan and Shaver's (1993) work indicates that divorce may not affect college students' attachment styles, although marital quality and various postdivorce situations do appear to have an effect. Among undergraduate men and women, parental divorce did not have an effect on a child's relationship status or quality (Brennan and Shaver, 1993). Parental marital quality, if the parents were still married, and maternal remarriage, if the parents were divorced, did have a positive effect on student relationships, however. Students whose parents' marriages were troubled were unusually likely to be involved in a romantic relationship but rated these relationships in relatively unfavorable terms.

Much of the research since the 1980s makes reference to the impact of marital disruption on children's academic achievement, school experiences, psychosocial development, criminal behavior, and early parenting. This work shares several features. First, it depends almost entirely on discussions of poverty (Gadsden and the Philadelphia Children's

Network, 1993). That is, many of the effects that are identified are tied to the decline in the standard of living (Chase-Lansdale et al., 1994; McLanahan, 1984; McLoyd, 1990). Second, there is often discussion of the absence of another person to assist mothers in childrearing and to provide emotional support (Hetherington and Camara, 1988).

Third, the effects of marital disruption are often collapsed with single parenting or female-headed households. Distinctions are not made between the homes of never-married women and divorced and separated women. Fourth, studies may use divorce as an explanation for behaviors that are the result of changing societal norms and practices that influence the choices of individuals. The range of effects of divorce is not displayed so that we understand better how children negotiate life when mothers, because of increased financial responsibility in the family, must work longer hours and use alternative babysitting arrangements such as television. Booth (1987) suggests that reliance on television may lead children of divorce to adopt relatively stereotyped views about gender, and adults from divorced families of origin may be conventional in their attitudes about the roles of men and women, despite changes in the roles and images of women.

Many children who grew up in intact families accept divorce as a reasonable alternative to marital conflict. Emery (1982) found that adults from continuously intact families of origin that were riddled with parental marital conflict had positive attitudes toward divorce. Thus, the interparental, intrafamilial conflict that many of these children experience may lead them to find divorce an acceptable alternative. Parents in conflictual relationships and unhappy situations convey a message to their children that they should persevere and that the intactness of marriage supersedes personal happiness. Silvestri (1992) provides evidence that male college students from divorced homes may be less likely to have interpersonal behavior and cognitions against closeness and to exhibit a pattern of being the "guarded-hostile-rescuer." The untenable nature of determining the impact of divorce is reflected perhaps in the contrasting findings of two studies conducted during the same time period: Booth et al. (1985) found that attitudes did predict later divorce behavior, while Thornton (1985) indicated that attitudes toward divorce did not predict who did and did not divorce. What the data seem to suggest is a need for more indepth studies that identify the mechanisms for transmission using different methodologies and for greater clarity between perceived effects and actual effects of intergenerational transfer, for multiple variables, in divorced and intact families.

Status Attainment

Status attainment in sociology examines "the relationship between various family background characteristics and economic status" (Corcoran et al., 1992, p. 576). Pioneered by Blau and Duncan in the mid-1960s, this domain of work uses coefficients from path analysis to estimate the relative impact of variables such as father's education and income on son's education and income. Two studies in particular which are interested in intergenerational effects use this model. The first is Corcoran et al. (1992) which adds to this body of work specifically by appending community background variables (e.g., median family income, male unemployment rate, percentage of female-headed families with children, and percentage of families on public assistance) as well as poverty and welfare use (e.g., welfare income and family income). The authors used the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, which has re-interviewed members of the same families since 1968 and allows for

contemporaneous rather than retrospective reports of family characteristics. An advantage of the Corcoran et al. study is its focus on men, both as fathers and sons.

While not concerned with learning in particular, the results of this research suggest intergenerational effects of poverty. More specifically, men who come from families with a history of welfare receipt were more likely to have low economic status themselves. The same negative relationship held true for men who came from low-income, nonwelfare families. High community participation rates in the welfare system also tended to depress hourly wages and by extension earnings. The authors cautioned against making causal inferences because of measurement error and omitted variables. Although not suggested by Corcoran et al., one possible next step could be more qualitative work in order to understand whether these are purely structural issues, i.e., earnings are depressed because these men are shut out of networks which would give them entry into more high-paying positions, or whether an individual's level of community receipt of welfare depresses his ambition and achievement orientation. The larger context of work available in the period studied as well as shifts in the nature of work were not mentioned in this article.

The second study (Gruca et al., 1988) differs from the earlier model in two ways. First, it focuses on daughters rather than sons. Second, it looks specifically at the type of career choices, as opposed to earnings or education. The five categories of variables used were (1) student background characteristics, (2) pre-college variables, (3) institutional characteristics of college attended, (4) measures of collegiate experience, and (5) outcomes. Data came from the Cooperative Institutional Research Program of the American Council on Education. In this longitudinal study, students were surveyed in 1971 and 1980. Results suggest that parents' level of college education indirectly shapes daughter's educational attainment and career choice.

Race was an explicit variable, with the major difference being that father's education was more important for White females while mother's education was more important for Black females. The explanation offered for the latter finding was that it reflected a "matricentered family structure" (p. 118). However, this explanation ignores several other factors. Two of these are (1) the ratio of White to Black participants was three to one, with substantial and more varied data for White participants, and (2) the differences may be a question of more Black mothers than fathers having attended college. Black women's greater access to college has a long history (see Giddings, 1984); perhaps this is another case in which young Black women are following their mothers' behavior. Also, Black women historically have been at the bottom of gender-race comparisons (Wright-Myers, 1980); so it is not surprising that Black women might socialize their daughters to seek "sex atypical" careers that tend to pay more. More qualitative research needs to be done to uncover why these effects are subtle rather than direct and to include more analysis of cultural context.

Summary

Intergenerational learning is apparent in the parenting styles of adult children, with many choosing not to inflict upon their children the harsh parenting they experienced as children. However, the specific mechanism for intergenerational transmission and the actual effects of father involvement is difficult to determine. Children who grow up in healthy, happy families appear to assume their role as parents with positive attitudes. Despite the typical reference to parents and children in intergenerational studies,

grandparents and often great-grandparents are increasingly a source of support and may contribute to children's attitudes and beliefs as much as parents. The increased likelihood of three and four-generational families suggests that research should understand better how these multiple generations connect around children's development and what the long-term implications are for families.

Relationships between parents and adult children appear strongest for mothers and daughters, with mothers having more influence on daughters' perceptions of gender roles. Children whose fathers were present and involved in the home report the greatest comfort around issues of sexuality. Parents seemingly affect adult children's attitudes and behaviors most often in religious practices and beliefs, political activism, and educational values, with some differential effects appearing in mothers' influence on daughters' activism and fathers' influence on sons' religious practices.

There is still no clear-cut evidence about the effects of divorce, although increasingly studies draw a connection between divorce and several negative behaviors and experiences such as single parenting in the next generation. The effect that is most harmful is a decline in a family's standard of living which may explain some of the different outcomes for children. A consistent finding, however, is that compared with children from most intact homes, children of divorce consider divorce a viable alternative to marital conflict. However, children in unhappy, conflictual homes also share this view.

NEGATIVE EFFECTS OF INTERGENERATIONAL LEARNING: "UNHEALTHY" FAMILIES

The term, "unhealthy," applied to families is decidedly value-laden. However, rather than offering judgment in this review, we refer here to parent and family practices and behaviors that the literature describes as having deleterious effects on children, e.g., alcohol, drug, child, and spousal abuse (see Fitzgerald et al., 1995). As the previous discussion suggests, not all intergenerational learning is healthy or positive. Alcohol abuse, physical aggression, and child and spousal abuse are but a few examples of a troubled family system, but how children enact the messages of this system in their adult lives may have a perpetuated effect on subsequent generations. Are these behaviors transmitted intergenerationally? What is the impact of these behaviors on later generations?

Discussions about alcohol abuse in college-age adults suggest common effects for men and women. Fischer and Wampler (1991) focused on whether personality type (as defined by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator) and family role (hero, mascot, lost child, or scapegoat) served as a buffer against or provided greater susceptibility for alcohol abuse and dysfunction in the family of origin. Data from their sample of Southwestern college students suggested that lost children and scapegoats, two negative family roles, were more susceptible to dysfunction in the family of origin for both males and females. While the mascot role served as a buffer for men, it increased the vulnerability of women. The effects of both variables appeared to be buffered by both roles and personality type among women, while for men, family role buffered the effect of family dysfunction; personality type buffered the effect of family addictions.

Perkins (1987) investigated the relationship between religiosity and alcohol abuse, asking the question: do parental religious traditions influence alcohol abuse among college students? The data from this Northeastern, upper-middle-class sample indicate that the answer is yes. Non-Jews,

those with weak attachment to any faith, and children of alcoholic parents were more likely to abuse alcohol. Parents' religious traditions seemed to influence the propensity to abuse alcohol both directly and indirectly.

Other situations are particularly stressful and threatening. Caspi and Elder (1988) in a study on the intergenerational construction of problem behavior and relationships found a reinforcing relationship between unstable, problem behavior and unstable family ties. Intergenerationally unstable personalities, they suggest, are produced by unstable marital relationships and ineffective parenting in a repeating, cyclical way. The authors conclude that aversive family patterns mediate the influence of unstable parenting of offspring and that the relational styles learned in childhood are likely to be evoked in similar situations.

One of those unshakable tenets in the mythology around spouse and child abuse has been that if children witness or experience abuse they will continue the cycle as abusers. A study by Kalmuss (1984) contributes to this conventional wisdom and research. Using data from a "nationally representative sample" to explore whether there is a relationship between experiencing or witnessing violence in the family of origin on the one hand and perpetrating violence against one's spouse on the other, Kalmuss' results indicate that those who observed violence between their parents as children were more likely to perpetrate violence against their spouse than those experiencing violence as a teenager. Sons and daughters were equally as likely to be victims as perpetrators after witnessing their fathers hitting their mothers. The intergenerational transmission of this behavior appears to be role-specific, i.e., children who observe violence between parents may come to see it as acceptable behavior between spouses but not against kids. Frey-Angel (1989) suggests that observation of violence perpetuates the cycle in the next generation.

Adults who have been abused as children also demonstrate intergenerational continuity. In studies by Egeland et al. (1987) and Herrenkohl et al. (1983), adult children were able to develop trust and intimacy by rising above the obstacles of an abusive childhood and through the support of loving partners and spouses and supportive networks in their adult lives. In a study of 44 mothers abused as children, Egeland et al. conclude that child abuse victims who do not continue the cycle of abuse share several common experiences, e.g., one parent figure who showed them love and support; a fairly stable living situation; intact, childhood families; and a supportive husband or partner living in the home. However, almost 70 percent of mothers abused as children abuse their own children. The findings suggest that the severity of abuse experienced by the mother as a child predicts the likelihood that she too will abuse her own children.

Edwards and Alexander (1992) explored whether family background has an effect on long-term adjustment to childhood sexual abuse that is distinct from the abuse itself. The authors studied a group of women who were mostly White and middle-class, of whom close to one-half had a history of sexual abuse. The women who had been sexually abused reported more parental conflict in their own families, as well as less satisfactory relationships with female friends. The authors conclude that there are links among child sexual abuse, parental conflict, paternal dominance, and adult psychosocial adjustment. Cornett (1985) used a psychoanalytic approach in order to conceptualize some of the intergenerational transmission of child physical abuse. He used empathy as a measure, arguing that neither abused children nor parents possess it. Ultimately, he provided prescriptions for

treating the abusive parent and the whole family.

Summary

This section examined the impact of addictive behaviors and various types of violence in the family of origin on the children's adult behaviors with their own children. Dysfunction in the family of origin seems to have a negative effect on the propensity toward alcohol abuse and long-term adjustment to sexual abuse. Yet, the direction of causality among the variables is not clear-cut. There does appear to be a cycle of abuse which is not only transgenerational but also role-specific, i.e., that men and fathers appear to be the ones who abuse, and women and mothers are abused. However, the effects on children are equally serious for boys and girls when they assume roles as fathers and mothers. It takes early therapeutic intervention, most likely in a group setting, to stop the cycle which allows the problem to fester.

RACE AND ETHNICITY

The issues of race and ethnicity are among the least studied areas in intergenerational learning. As noted in the introduction, studies focus almost exclusively on White, middle-class women and men (Barnett et al., 1991). Exceptions are studies that examine intergenerational poverty and single parenting (McLanahan, 1984) and White-Black differences (Blee and Tickamyer, 1987; Carlson and Iovini, 1985). However, even these studies do not examine cultural contexts, focusing primarily on a subset of child support and parenting behaviors. Within the body of work examined for this literature review, almost 90 percent of the studies excluded families of color in the sample or discussion except within the context of single-mother households.

There were many possible ways to address this void in the literature. We were hesitant initially to isolate the studies or the issues of race and culture because of our desire to contribute an integrative analysis to the discourses in the field rather than appear to marginalize the issues. However, we decided that a separate section, rather than endorsing the isolation of the issues, creates a space in which questions and problems about race and ethnicity and about families of color and other ethnic families can be initiated. Class, an equally important and little studied issue in intergenerational learning studies, also is not discussed

What happens when race and ethnicity are seen as important mediating variables in intergenerational relations? The literature would suggest that race is typically an issue when researchers attempt to study African American families. Few articles describe race and ethnicity as shaping the cultural context and thus family relationships of non-Black families. Hogan et al. (1990) focus on issues of race in the design of their study and examine the relationship between race and the availability of kin and social networks and the resources to Black and White mothers in single- and two-parent households.

There has been a historical bias in work on families and African Americans; Black families are labeled often in traditional studies as different from the norm if not deviant. However, much of the work emerging in the 1960s and 1970s was developed around an alternative perspective that emphasized the strengths of African American families. Many of these studies (e.g., Billingsley, 1968; Gutman, 1976; Hill, 1972; Stack, 1975) aimed to respond to earlier work that described Black families as pathological.

Several studies continued the focus on family strengths into the 1980s (e.g., Allen, 1985; McAdoo, 1986; Spencer et al., 1985; Staples, 1985), while exploring other

directions for work in the field. More recent studies (e.g., Stack and Burton, 1993 and Gadsden, 1995) are attempts to advance the arguments on the "strengths of Black families" and expand the perspective to include a variety of family types. They derive conceptual frameworks from the literature and their own research, and unlike some of the work in the field, are grounded in qualitative analysis, one on low-income Black families exclusively and the other on Black and Puerto Rican families across class lines.

Taylor et al. (1990) and Littlejohn-Blake and Anderson-Darling (1993) use both methodological and conceptual analyses to build on the literature about strengths, citing issues that range from the socialization of Black children, to family roles, to the psychological well-being of Black American families. Their analysis suggests that although the picture of intergenerational learning in Black life is more balanced than in previous years, most analyses continue to use a comparative framework in which Whites are the norm against which Blacks are measured (McDaniel, 1993; Miller, 1993).

Similar to other groups, African American families may have three to four generations available to support children (Burton and Bengtson, 1985). Burton and Dilworth-Anderson (1991), focusing exclusively on the Black elderly, examined the historical changes in the roles of aged Blacks in the family network. Older Blacks were more likely to be part of four or even five-generational families. Data currently being collected at the Institute for Social Research at The University of Michigan (Jackson et al.) should provide compelling insight on multiple generations of African American families. The importance of grandparenthood also was found to increase as single-parent households increase. Freeman (1990) supports this work, using a life-cycle approach and clinical orientation that focus on the strengths of Black families within their cultural context.

Considerable attention has been given to the effects of one-parent families and adolescent parenting within African American families and the intergenerational effect of these formation patterns. Less attention is assigned to the structural conditions that contribute to this intergenerational effect, e.g., the high levels of joblessness among African American males and declining marriage rates (Anderson, 1990; Center for the Study of Social Policy and the Philadelphia Children's Network, 1994). Staples (1985) uses exchange theory to focus on what he calls the conflict between family ideology and structural conditions, e.g., Black women who do not marry or do not remain married when they perceive the costs to outweigh the benefits of such an arrangement. Hines et al.'s (1992) comparative analysis on the relationship between race-ethnicity and family life describes the positive nature of cultural patterns as well as the difficulties that affect intergenerational relations and thus lead to therapy.

Harriette Pipes McAdoo's (1978) research on the relationship between upward mobility and extended kin networks expands on Stack's (1974) earlier work to include middle- and low-income Black families in the suburbs and cities. Unlike Stack's research, however, the middle-income families in McAdoo's study did not drop their obligations to the extended kin-help network in order to facilitate their own needs. The notions of reciprocity and "social debt" expressed by this sample throughout the mobility process led to the conclusion that the extended family pattern is not limited to structural coping but is a powerful and valuable cultural pattern. Despite the richness of this work, one wonders how the passage of nearly 20 years since its publication has made a difference.

John Lewis McAdoo (1986, 1993) examined the myths around Black men and families, suggesting that Black fathers, like fathers from other ethnic groups, participate in childrearing decisions in the family. Limited research on the parenting styles of Black fathers and how these affect the socialization of their children reduces the likelihood that the nature of Black fathers' participation will be understood. While much has been said about the inability of African American men to carry out the provider role, little research has been done to determine how Black fathers' unemployment experiences shape family life.

The cultural linkages between African American families and African patterns is used often as a framework to examine the practices within different African American communities. McDaniel (1990) uses work from antebellum America to examine and chart the perpetuation of practices around marriage and childbearing. Foster (1983) examines the range of kinship activities that constitute African American cultures. Historically, the analyses of these cultures have not been complimentary of Black life. Frazier (1939) saw the cultural trappings of African American life that persisted after slavery as an obstacle to African American families being accepted and successful in American society. Constructs that reinforce Frazier's argument and those that refute it have been examined consistently since his 1939 analysis (Billingsley, 1968; DuBois, 1903; Gutman, 1976; Miller, 1993; Moynihan, 1965).

Understanding what parents want to transmit may be one way to understanding how they intend to transmit it. In a study on the transmission of heritage, Lasker and Lasker (1991) found that Jewish parents intentionally transmitted certain qualities and values specifically related to Jewish identity. However, other than the action of sending their children to Hebrew school, it is not clear exactly how the parents teach and model particular aspects of their identity in a way to ensure that they perpetuate what is important. Steinberg (1986) argues that intergenerational learning translated into occupations that enabled Jewish Americans to be successful in America. Jewish success is described as a function of the unique occupational background of Jews in their countries of origin.

Intergenerational learning may be affected by social events and crisis, as we have noted in the section on life-course frameworks. Weinstein-Shr and Henkin (1991) identify obstacles to the intergenerational transmission of cultural norms, values, and beliefs generated by the refugee experience. Focusing on Southeast Asian refugee families, the study examined the stresses and strains attendant upon each generation and highlighted the specific resources refugees have which help in their adaptation to life in the United States. The critical discussion here is associated with the term, change, and how each generation can adapt to it. Similarly, Rogler and Santana Cooney (1984) suggest that intergenerational processes within Puerto Rican families in New York City were affected by migration-induced change in their sociocultural environments. These articles are a poignant reminder of the difficulties of intergenerational learning due to involuntary displacement.

Falbo's (1991) study of grandparents' contributions to children in China found that more contact with better educated grandparents was positively and significantly related to academic outcomes. Having been cared for by grandparents before elementary school was associated with good academic performance. Grandparents and children typically co-resided, and their cohabitation had no negative effects on either children's personality or academic outcomes. In general, the grandparents over-indulge their

grandchildren, suggesting some consistency in grandparent behavior perhaps across cultures.

Summary

Most of the studies described in this section share at least two common features: (1) they were primarily review studies, most examining the gaps in the research on African American families, and (2) they decried the paucity of work that acknowledges the racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity of families. Most studies continue to rely on a comparative model in which the variable nature of White, middle-class formation patterns is used as the norm, i.e., how Blacks measure up to Whites. Although there is some work on Jewish, Puerto Rican, and Chinese families, the thread that runs through much of the literature is that race-ethnicity issues shape the individual and family lives of Black American people disproportionately. Strengths within ethnic families need to be emphasized, particularly with respect to how they can be used to enhance therapeutic situations, the knowledge base in the field, and contribute to a strong cultural focus on the issues.

CONCLUSIONS

The initial goal of this literature review was to examine fathers' roles in intergenerational learning. As we stated in the introduction to this review, the data on this topic are limited, and where they exist, they tend to combine mother and father effects or rely on perceived effects. The tendency to collapse father-related issues into the larger area of families and not to isolate variables about fathers appears consistent with the notion that children's development and socialization are "women's work." However, this notion and the scant research that accompany it do not reflect the changes in a society in which women who are mothers work and often have jobs as demanding or more demanding than those of their husbands and partners. Neither does the work consider the nature of shared childcare and other household responsibilities or acknowledge that fathers as biological contributors to children's birth are critical (through their presence or absence) in the life-course development of children and families.

Our conclusion from the literature is simply that children's behaviors reflect the beliefs and practices of their parents and families, sometimes in concordance and other times in reaction. We began this critical review with an obvious question related to intergenerational learning and fathers: What information are fathers transmitting to their children, and is this information transmitted intergenerationally? At first glance, the answer seems to be that fathers are contributing very little directly. Although fathers' roles in intergenerational learning are difficult to assess, they appear to be significant both when fathers are present and when they are absent in the daily lives of their children. Thus, there is some argument for a rigorous discussion not only about father absence but also about the continuum of positive and negative impact of father presence.

The contributions of research to discourses on intergenerational learning well might lie in increasing the number and quality of studies. We know very little about what men learn about themselves and within their families. It is difficult to generalize from many studies because of problems with sample size, measurement error, omitted variables, retrospective accounts, and lack of class and racial diversity. In the absence of a critical core of research on fathers and intergenerational learning, we focused on the broader issues of intergenerational, family, and life-course development, examining where literature permitted analyses of studies

on issues of children's development, views of family life, and perspectives on their roles within families and society.

The implications of the studies on intergenerational learning are not neatly packaged into research, practice, and policy, nor does the separation of the three domains serve our purposes well here. In general, research needs to expand the subject and informant pool in order to understand how learning occurs in different populations and across social classes. There seems to be some disjuncture between researchers' talk about a more diverse society and changing family forms and the research practices they use to focus disproportionately on White, middle-class families. In addition, research might consider the ways in which families of color are studied, presented, and represented. There is an impending urgency around adolescent parenting and the poverty within female-headed households, many of which are disproportionately African American and Latino. However, how we examine these households may benefit from an examination of other African American and Latino families that have experienced varying levels of western-honored success or that demonstrate different abilities to navigate their members through the particularities and inequities of social systems. Here, we do not suggest that researchers should bias their findings but that they broaden their conceptualizations of the issues, the family configurations that they value as worthy of study, and the design of studies that respond to the variety of racial, cultural, and ethnic groups in the United States. This, it would seem, is also important as the number of biracial, bicultural families increase and as growing numbers of White, middle-class, unmarried women choose to bear children.

Second, there is a theme throughout the existing literature that grandparents contribute in meaningful ways to their grandchildren's learning and that the natural impact of their contributions are affected by differences in cultural norms. With increases in the divorce rate and reliance on families of origin, the role of grandparents in intergenerational learning acknowledges the centrality of multiple generations in many families. The role of grandmothers, which has been the focus of most discussions, should continue to be the center of studies, particularly those addressing the changing roles of grandmothers. However, studies on grandparents' roles need to bring grandfathers to the center also, both those who were present and active and those who were absent in the lives of their own children. Practice and policy also will need to be aware of the ongoing influences of grandparents. Where grandparents provide for the general support of their grandchildren, policies that do not allow payments to these surrogate parents minimize their contributions to the healthy development of many children.

Third, the intergenerational effects of parenting are consistent with our intuitive sense that children in happy, generally nonconflictual, intact families will experience fewer problems with parenting than those who grew up in homes where there were conflictual parent relationships. Although we should continue to examine the intergenerational effect of these "healthy" homes, substantial work--much of it painful--needs to focus on the negative consequences of homes in which there is abuse and the differential effects of father involvement and absence. That is, does a dysfunctional or abusive father have a greater impact than a dysfunctional or abusive mother? Other issues range from the impact of child and child-observed abuse to adolescent and adult children's imitation of behaviors around alcoholism, drug use, and psycho-emotional well-being.

Fourth, the absence of a critical discourse on the intergenerational impact of fathers on children's educational beliefs and practices

signals a need to transform the culture of fatherhood and fathering. The transition in gender roles over the past 20 years suggests that the responsibility for children's education as "women's work" is neither applicable nor advantageous. Here, the connections among research, policy, and practice are obvious. As research develops more intensive and expansive designs to identify fathers' impact on children's educational choices and on their ability to persist, practice must construct effective ways to invite fathers into children's educational experiences and sustain their participation in the learning process.

Policies within workplaces and federal, state, and local government systems must create ways for fathers to be involved and to distance themselves from the stereotypes that deny fathers an opportunity to be engaged meaningfully. Policies for the establishment of government-supported intergenerational and parenting programs might build into grants incentives for grantees to include fathers over the course of the program (recognizing the evolutionary and difficult nature of recruitment) and increase support for research and evaluation components that encourage researchers and practitioners to work collaboratively in the development and implementation of the programs.

Fifth, the intergenerational impact of divorce is apparent in many of the studies. More basic studies and secondary analyses are needed, however, to support the sweeping generalizations that are made about the impact of father absence from a relatively small core of data. In addition, the work on the effects of family instability should make distinctions between children of never-married parents and divorced or separated parents. This work could be complemented by studies that examine the intergenerational effect of cooperative parenting, also. A special focus might address a subset of families, to which we refer to as *fragile families*.

In addition, research needs to model, through more broadened conceptualizations, the impact of fathers' behaviors on both sons and daughters. The current impetus in public campaigns often includes a subtle subtext that assigns more attention to sons than daughters. This, of course, is a complete reversal of earlier work that assumed that mothers influenced both daughters and sons more than fathers. We suggest here that we minimize this imbalance and inequity in the literature and in public and private discourses. The focus on sons is justified richly by the fact that sons who choose to have families will become fathers; however, studying father-daughter and mother-son relationships also enables us to examine a variety of issues around gender. When the work focuses on father-son relationships alone or primarily, it needs to provide a more comprehensive picture of what men are learning, who is teaching them, and how; make all men visible; or forego any attempts to explore the truly complex reality of men's lives.

There is considerable, yet insufficient, work on women and mothers. This work needs to examine the deeper issues of poverty and coping and the intergenerational effect on children. Herein, however, lies one primary and critical source of designs, comparisons, and complementary work. If we extrapolate from the research done on and about women, perhaps we can wholeheartedly advocate the idea that men need to be supported in their roles as fathers. This includes focusing on parenting classes and support groups as well as decent paying jobs. It is important to conduct more research with men and fathers, to seek out from them what they think they need and not assume that a man is not taking on his role of father if he is not living in the same household with his children. In other words, researchers, practitioners, and policymakers should contemplate a view of the world in which men could assume

responsibility as sons, fathers, and grandfathers; the ways that current constructions limit these connections across multiple generations, particularly for low-income fathers of color and those in other ethnic groups; and strategies for including mothers in the conversation.

Intergenerational learning occurs in all families, irrespective of class, race, or culture; and fathers contribute in many ways to how children think about their roles and abilities into adulthood. Families are biological and social structures, providing the first intersection between individual and society. No matter what the family pattern, intergenerational transmission seems to occur. How research, practice, and policy contribute to this intersection will affect not only environmental and social structures but also the life needs of individual members and the survival of family cultures and family organization within and across multiple generations--for fathers and mothers and, most important, the well-being of their children.

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